A U M

By truthfulness, indeed, by penance, right knowledge, and abstinence, must the Self be gained; the Self that spotless anchorites gain is pure, and like a light within the body.
—MUNDAKA UPANISHAD.

THEOSOPHY

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MOTIVE AND IDEA

THE unity of any gathering of human beings depends upon the purpose for which they have come together. The idea of a group of men and women, as a *group,* is meaningless except in terms of some common purpose held by all the members. Not only in the human kingdom does this law prevail, but in all Nature. Below man, however, this unifying principle operates under the law of natural impulse; it is expressed by the members of a group, but not perceived. The herd instinct spoken of by biologists fulfills a unifying purpose for groups of animals, whether a pack of wolves or a flock of birds. This unity is instinctive; it serves some organic need of the species.

Many of the organized groups of men and women have been formed to further an end inspired by natural impulse. The difference between natural impulse in the lower kingdoms and its activity in human beings lies in the fact that men *rationalize* their impulses. The self-preservative instinct of some species of animals becomes with man the motive power for establishing large standing armies; the predatory instinct of other species emerges in man to stimulate imperialism and exploitation, while the mind formulates the intellectual justifications for offensive war. Nearly every collective action of human beings has its analogue in some instinctive drive in the lower kingdoms. This is why anthropologists have become so convinced that man is but a higher animal.

There are, however, some important things to be noted in these facts. First, every purpose which derives from natural impulse is *partial* in its objective. Instinct serves the species, not the whole of life. This is the nature of instinct, and it is the fitting expression of intelligence in the lower kingdoms. Second, there is among men a type of collective effort which has no analogy in animal societies. Such an effort would have for its purpose the welfare and enlightenment

of the sum total of all beings in manifested life. While instinct invariably requires the sacrifice of one form of life to the organic needs of another, universal altruism involves sacrifice of *another order*. Its motive force derives from another plane of being than the drives of instinct, and the existence of such motives among men is evidence that this plane is *real*.

The part played by mind in understanding the demands of motive-power, irrespective of its plan of origin, in acting as the instrument of fulfillment of motives, in weighing and comparing the merits of the various motives which are present in the human being, is of vital importance in this problem. The selfish man uses his mind to explain why he thinks selfishness is best for him. His mind also serves to justify the action of groups organized to serve the common selfishness of their members. Such action is rarely described as selfish; its governing motive identifies the action as entirely laudable and necessary to the welfare of the group. But mind also may be used to give rational structure to universal altruism. It is the same power of mind, but the motive for its thought is different.

All this shows that motive is at once the source of the energies of men, the guiding principle of their ideas and theories about life, and the basis for judgment as to philosophy and ethical doctrines. Realization of the primacy of motive in all our determinations brings a new attitude toward the ideas we hold. We begin to examine the ground of their origin instead of their logical coherence. We see that the force of a man's conviction about what he believes to be true is really an expression of his desire—higher or lower—and that reason serves only an ancillary function. Some may think that reason helps to show a man when his motive is wrong. This may appear to be true, but something besides reason prompted the question, "Is my motive the right one?" It was motive which led to an examination of motives; reason is only the instrument of analysis, not its moving cause.

Partial beings express limited and opposing motives. Universal beings embody the motive which joins all nature, visible and invisible, in a common purpose and striving. That some men conceive themselves as universal beings, — are able to fathom the vast scheme of purposive development on every plane and in every grade of intelligence—is evidence that man is universal in potentiality, although all too often dominated by partial motives. Man grasps universal ideas through his mind, which is an expression of universal mind. So, also, universal motive is its own criterion; it is the Will of the One Self.

ANCIENT LANDMARKS

Plato and Aristotle

WHEN Socrates was sixty years old, Plato, then a youth of twenty, came to him as a pupil. When Plato was sixty years old, the seventeen-year-old Aristotle presented himself, joining the Teacher's group of "Friends," as the members of the Academy called themselves. Aristotle was a youth of gentle birth and breeding, his father occupying the position of physician to King Philip of Macedon. Possessed of a strong character, a penetrating intellect, apparent sincerity, but great personal ambition, Aristotle was a student in the Academy during the twenty years he remained in Athens. His remarkable intellectual powers led Plato to call him the "Mind of the School."

After the death of his teacher, Aristotle, accompanied by Xenocrates, went to the court of Hermias, lord of Atarneus, whose sister he afterward married. When Aristotle was forty years old, Philip of Macedon engaged him as tutor for his son Alexander, then thirteen, whose later exploits gained for him the title of Alexander the Great. Philip became so interested in Aristotle that he rebuilt his native city and planned a school where the latter might teach. When Alexander started out to conquer the world, learned men accompanied him to gather scientific facts. After his Persian conquest Alexander presented his former tutor with a sum equivalent to a million dollars, which enabled Aristotle to purchase a large library and continue his work under the most ideal circumstances.

When Aristotle was forty-nine years old he returned to Athens and founded his own school of philosophy. It was known as the Peripatetic School because of Aristotle's habit of strolling up and down the shaded walks around the Lyceum while talking with his pupils. In the morning he gave discourses on philosophy to his more advanced pupils, who were known as his "esoteric" students. In the afternoon a larger circle gathered around him, to whom he imparted simpler teachings. This was known as his exoteric group.

In passing from Plato to Aristotle, we at once become conscious of a distinct change in philosophical concepts and methods. This is all the more noticeable because of our ignorance of Aristotle's complete system. The writings which have come down to us comprise only about a quarter of his works. These are all incomplete, some of them seeming to be notes intended for elaboration in his lectures. They are often sketchy and obscure, highly technical and full of

repetitions. Sometimes they are so abstruse that we are obliged to call upon the imagination to supply the missing links of his deductions. Before reaching our Western scholars his works passed through too many hands to remain immaculate. From Theophrastus they passed to Neleus, whose heirs kept them mouldering in subterranean caves for a century and a half. After that his manuscripts were copied and augmented by Apellicon of Theos, who supplied many missing paragraphs, probably from his own conjectures. Although the Arabians were acquainted with Aristotle's works from the eighth century onward, the Christian world paid little attention to them until three centuries later. In the eleventh century, however, the Aristotelian doctrine of Forms became the bone of contention which divided philosophers into two classes which, from that day to this, have remained separate. On the one side were the Nominalists, who maintained that Universals are mere names for the common attributes of things and beings. On the other side were the Realists, whose thought crudely resembled the Platonic doctrine of Ideas as independent realities.

It seems a great historic tragedy that Aristotle, who remained under the influence of Plato for nearly twenty years, failed to continue the line of teaching begun by Pythagoras and clarified by Plato. But Aristotle was not content to be a "transmitter." Plato claimed no originality for his ideas, giving the credit to Socrates and Pythagoras. Aristotle's failure in this direction may be due to the fact that, while both Pythagoras and Plato were Initiates of the Mysteries, Aristotle was never initiated and depended on logical speculation for the development of his theories. This accounts for his many divergences from the teachings of Plato, whose philosophy was based upon the wisdom of the ancient East. According to Diogenes Laertius, Aristotle fell away from his teacher while Plato was still alive, whereat Plato remarked, "Aristotle has kicked me, as foals do their mothers when they are born." While there is evidence that Aristotle never lost his high *personal* regard for Plato, the fact remains that in his later writings he never mentions Plato except to refute his doctrines, maintaining that the Platonic method is fatal to science.

At every period of the world's history some philosopher has asked the eternal question: Is there, in the universe or outside of it, an underlying Reality which is eternal, immovable, unchanging? The ancient Egyptians believed, as Hermes taught: "Reality is not upon the earth, my son. Nothing on earth is real. There are only

appearances. Appearance is the supreme illusion." In the still more ancient East, only the eternal and changeless was called Reality. All that is subject to change through differentiation and decay was called *Maya,* or illusion.

It is the task of Philosophy to investigate this all-important question: What is real? At first glance, Aristotle's definition of philosophy seems to agree with Plato's. Plato described philosophy as the science of the *Idea,* the science which deals with *noumena* rather than *phenomena.* Aristotle defined it as the science of the universal essence of that which is real or actual. Plato, the Initiate, taught that there is *one* Reality lying behind the numberless differentiations of the phenomenal world. Aristotle maintained that there is a graded *series* of realities, each step in the series revealing more and more those universal relationships which make it an object of true knowledge. At the end of the series, he said, lies that which is no longer relative, but absolute.

Plato taught that "beyond all finite existences and secondary causes, all laws, ideas and principles, there is an *Intelligence,* or Mind, the first principle of all principles, the Supreme Idea upon which all other ideas are grounded, . . . the ultimate substance from which all things derive their being and essence, the first and efficient Cause of all the order and harmony and beauty which pervades the Universe." This he called the "World of Ideas."

What, actually, is this Intelligence, this Cosmic Mind of which Plato spoke with such assurance? Theosophy explains that Universal Mind is not something outside the universe, but includes all those various intelligences which were evolved in a previous period of evolution. Evolution, therefore, is the further development of those intelligences. This unfolding is the result of conscious experience, beginning in the highest state of manifested matter and descending more and more into concrete forms until the physical is reached. Then begins the ascent, plus the experience gained.

Plato held that the *Ideas,* the Forms of things, are self-existent, and not dependent upon the ever-changing objects of the senses. The noumenon, according to Plato, is the real, the phenomenon only appearance. Aristotle wrote extensively in criticism of Plato's doctrine of Ideas, affirming that "no universals exist over and above the individual objects and separate from them." He refused any substantial reality to "the unity which is predicated of many individual things." Universal principles, he held, are real, and are the objects of our reason, as distinguished from the physical objects of sense-perception. Yet universals are real only as they exist in indi-

viduals. "It is," he said, "apparently impossible that any of the so-called universals should exist as substance." This conflict between Plato and Aristotle on the subject of reality led to almost infinite controversy and confusion among later philosophers. To the extent that Aristotle endows universals with reality, he is Platonic in thought. His commentators have endeavored to interpret Aristotle according to their predilection. One writer maintains that "according to Aristotle, the formal aspect of universality is conferred by the mind, and therefore, *the universal, as such,* does not exist in individual things, but *in the mind alone.*" (William Turner, *History of Philosophy,* p. 132.) Another points out that while both the *Categories* and the *Metaphysics* are based on the assumption of the reality of *individual* substances, "the *Categories* (cap. 5) admits that universal species and genera can be called substances, whereas the *Metaphysics* (Z 13) denies that a universal can be a substance at all." Yet Aristotle is constrained to regard as "substance" the universal essence of a species of substance, "because the individual essence of an individual substance really is that substance, and the universal essence of the whole species is supposed to be indivisible and therefore identical with the individual essence of any individual of the species." (*Encyc. Brit.,* "Aristotle," 11th ed.)

In maintaining this Aristotle seems to invalidate all his arguments against the existence of universals independent of particulars. It was doubtless such difficulties in the comprehension of Aristotle's real meaning that led H. P. B. to remark upon the abstruse character of his writings, asking, "What do we know so certain about Aristotle?" (*Isis Unveiled* I, 320.) It seems that in spite of his demand for research into particulars, Aristotle was forced to return to the Platonic view of origins. This is indicated by H. P. B.'s explanation of his theory of Privation, Form and Matter. As Lange points out in his *History of Materialism,* Aristotle's admission of the reality of the universal, *in* things, "leads, in its logical consequences, little as Aristotle cared to trouble himself with these, to the same exaltation of the universal over the particular which we find in Plato. For if it is once conceded that the essence of the individual lies in the species, the most essential part of the species must again lie on a still higher plane, or, in other words, the ground of the species must lie in the genus, and so on." (I, 88.) Thus, as one of Aristotle's translators has observed, "he is ultimately driven back to the very standpoint he derides in Platonism." This writer, Hugh Tredennick, makes clear the internal contradictions in Aristotle's thought:

> He is emphatic that form cannot exist in separation from matter; and yet the supreme reality turns out to be a pure form. He blames the Platonists for using metaphorical language, and yet when he comes to explain the ultimate method of causation he has to describe it in terms of love or desire. The truth is that Aristotle's thought is always struggling against Platonic influences, which nevertheless generally emerge triumphant in his ultimate conclusions. His great contribution to philosophy was on the side of method; but it was Plato, acknowledged or unacknowledged, who inspired all that was best in the thought of his great disciple. (*Metaphysics,* Introduction, I, xxx.)

The structural stresses and strains in the philosophy of Aristotle are due to his attempt to subject to critical analysis according to his own theory of knowledge the principles and ideas he had learned from Plato. Aristotle, however, refused to recognize supersensible cognition as the source of knowledge, while the clairvoyant vision of the soul was the *only* channel to truth, according to Plato. But Aristotle had not this vision; hence his dependence on sense-perception and his elevation of the physical world to the status of reality. While admitting that knowledge must be in terms of concepts, of universals—thus escaping the chaos of mere empiricism—he held that we become aware of universals only by abstracting them from the phenomena of the senses. Thus principles or universals are *in* things, whether they be regarded as essences or as concepts. It seems almost as though Aristotle devoted his life to the task of showing that he, Aristotle, could point the way to final truth, without being initiated into the Mysteries, and that in order to do this he constructed a theory of knowledge which did not involve initiation as a prerequisite to real knowing. For the eye of wisdom he substituted the eye of sense. Hence he is truly spoken of as the Father of Modern Science.

Plato's science of all sciences was *Dialectic,* the doctrine of the *Idea in Itself,* just as physics is the science of the Ideas manifesting in nature, and Ethics is the science of Ideas applied to human action. Aristotle's science of sciences was *Logic,* the science of *analysis,* the weaknesses of which form the theme of Boris Bogoslovsky's book, *The Technique of Controversy.*

Plato divided knowledge into two classes, the one dealing with the noumenal, the other with the phenomenal world. The first he called *real* knowledge, the second, opinion. In this statement we find a clear reiteration of the forty-ninth Aphorism of Patanjali. Speaking of Wisdom—that form of knowledge which is absolutely

free from error—Patanjali says: "This kind of knowledge differs from the knowledge due to testimony and inference; because, in the pursuit of knowledge based upon these, the mind has to consider many particulars and is not engaged with the general field of knowledge itself." (Bk. I.)

Considering *real* knowledge as the only object worthy of the attention of the true philosopher, Plato began by postulating certain universal principles as the basis for understanding all particular phenomena. Aristotle, on the other hand, began with particulars and proceeded by gradual stages to the consideration of universal principles, declaring that "our knowledge of the individual *precedes* our knowledge of the universal."

The inductive method, which Aristotle established in the Western world—still slavishly followed by scientific thinkers—is defended on the supposition that it deals with things *as they are*. Knowledge gained through sense-perception, on which all learning is dependent, according to Aristotle, is therefore more reliable than any *a priori* concept of an ideal reality.

No student of Theosophy would deny the value of reasoning on the basis of many observed particulars. But he would add that this value is lost when the observer is ignorant of the fact that the phenomenal universe is in a constant state of change. How can changing phenomena be properly evaluated unless there is something changeless with which they may be compared? Philosophy, like Physics, must have its "whereon to stand." As Dr. A. Gordon Melvin observes in his latest book, *The New Culture*,

> The Aristotelian tends to be cocksure. He knows what he is talking about, but he does not talk about anything of importance. For the characteristic limitation of this type of search is that it apprehends bit by bit. It knows a corner of the world as long as that corner remains stationary. But it does not know wholes or fundamentals. The veil of matter is a particularization of truth, not its full realization.

Once we admit that real knowledge does exist, our next question will be: How can it be acquired? Aristotle answered the question by declaring that real knowledge can be gained only *through*, although not *from*, the senses. The intellectual faculty discerns the principles of things in the objects of the senses, and knowledge is the product of this abstraction. There are both external and internal senses, according to Aristotle. Memory and imagination are defined as internal senses, as is also the "sense" of self-consciousness. This latter sense, he said, resides in the heart. There is no room in

Aristotle's philosophy for the doctrine of innate ideas. Considering that there is nothing in the mind which is not first an image acquired through the senses, he taught that mind itself is only the potential *power* to think. All *objects* of thought are sensuous.

Plato answered the question in another manner. He taught that the *nous* of man, being "generated by the divine Father," possesses a nature akin to and homogeneous with the Divine Mind, and is therefore capable of beholding Reality. The faculty by which Reality is perceived is not a sense faculty, but one which belongs to the Soul. Theosophy describes this faculty as Intuition, by which a man may gaze directly upon ideas. Intuition is thus beyond and above the reasoning faculty, and is not dependent upon it. The use of that faculty is gained through the form of concentration described by Patanjali in his *Yoga Aphorisms*. When this form of concentration is perfected one is able to cognize all the inherent qualities of any object whatsoever, becoming completely identified with the thing considered and experiencing *in himself* all the qualities exhibited by the object. Plato knew that the best way to awaken that faculty is by turning the mind toward universal ideas; only such sublime objects of thought can produce the steadiness necessary for true contemplation.

In many cases, the teaching of Aristotle may be regarded as the exoteric version of Platonic truth. From the same ontological principles as his teacher, Aristotle reasoned to certain conclusions which to him seemed to follow necessarily, although resulting in a contradiction with one or another of Plato's doctrines. An instance of this kind is explained by H. P. B.:

> Aristotle argued that the world was eternal, and that it will always be the same; that one generation of men has always produced another, without ever having had a beginning that could be determined by our intellect. In this, his teaching, in its exoteric sense, clashed with that of Plato, who taught that "there was a time when mankind did not perpetuate itself"; but in spirit both doctrines agreed, as Plato adds immediately: "This was followed by the *earthly human* race, in which the primitive history was gradually forgotten and man sank deeper and deeper"; and Aristotle says: "If there has been a first man he must have been born without father or mother—which is repugnant to nature. For there could not have been a first egg to give a beginning to birds, or there should have been a first bird which gave a beginning to eggs, for a bird comes from an egg." The same he held good for all species, believing, with Plato,

that everything before it appeared on earth had first its being in spirit. (*Isis Unveiled* I, 428.)

Every natural body, according to Aristotle, is brought into existence by three principles: Privation, Form, and Matter. Privation, says H. P. B., "meant in the mind of the great philosopher that which the Occultists call the prototypes impressed in the Astral Light—the lowest plane and world of Anima Mundi." (*S. D.* I, 59.) Privation is not, however, "considered in Aristotelic philosophy as a principle in the composition of bodies, but as an external property in their production; for the production is a change by which the matter passes from the shape it has not to that which it assumes." (*Isis Unveiled* I, 310.) As to Form, "His philosophy teaches that besides the original matter, another principle is necessary to complete the triune nature of every particle, and this is form; an invisible, but still, in an ontological sense of the word, a substantial being, really distinct from matter proper." (*Ibid.* I, 312.) This substantial form Aristotle called the *soul.*

Plato, starting with universal principles, declared that the soul of man is derived from the Universal World-Soul, and is therefore identical in essence with that which is a radiation of the ever-unknown Absolute. Aristotle, starting from below, approached the subject of the soul by eliminating one by one those things which the soul is *not.* The conclusion he finally reached was that the soul is the form of the body. This soul, however, is plainly the astral or psychic principle, for Aristotle says in *De Anima,* "It cannot be that the body is the full realization or expression of the soul; rather on the contrary it is the soul which is the full realization of some body." (It may be noted that the term *Entelechy,* which is here translated "full realization," has been borrowed by members of the modern vitalist school of Biology to represent the formative principle of organic life.) Besides the *psyche* or mortal soul, Aristotle taught that there is in man a rational soul, the "creative reason," and with Plato held this *Nous* to be pre-existing and eternal, although he denied that the mind-principle carries with it the knowledge gained by individual experiences in the past, speaking of metempsychosis as "absurd." Thus, with Aristotle, the immortal element in man seems to lose its individual character on the death of the body.

Aristotle's cosmological speculations were in many cases opposed to the teachings of Plato. Plato, for one thing, was well versed in the heliocentric system. Aristotle adopted the astronomy of Eudoxus, which taught that the world is the center of the universe,

and that it is round and stationary. He described the earth as being surrounded by a sphere of air and a sphere of fire, saying that the heavenly bodies are fixed in these spheres.

In formulating his ethical system Aristotle started with Plato's query: What is the end of life, the highest good toward which a man can aspire? Reasoning inductively, Aristotle showed that a man's highest aim is not merely to live, for that aim he shares with the whole of nature. Nor is it to feel, for that is shared with the animals. As man is the only being in the universe who possesses a rational soul, Aristotle concluded that man's highest aim is the activity of the soul in conformity with reason. Although Plato taught that every man should concentrate upon the particular virtue which was most necessary for him at his own stage of evolution, he declared that *Justice* is the highest of all virtues, being inherent in the soul itself. That idea is clarified by Mr. Judge's statement that "all is soul and spirit ever evolving under the rule of law (or Justice) which is inherent in the whole." Aristotle, on the other hand, taught that the highest virtue is intellectual contemplation.

True happiness, according to Plato, is found only in the performance of one's own duty, which is determined individually by the degree of evolution achieved, and politically by the position one occupies in the State. Aristotle disagrees with Plato's view that individual happiness should be sacrificed for the good of the community. He believes that individual happiness depends not only upon virtue, but also upon wealth, pleasure and the opportunity for leisure. He does not advocate spending those leisure hours in the cultivation of any art, as he considers that artistic craftsmanship belongs to the field of manual labor, and that professional skill in any of the arts is a disgrace to a free citizen. The ideal life, from Aristotle's point of view, seems to be one which is given over entirely to intellectual research and contemplation—the life of a cultivated and reflective country gentlemen, remote from the workaday world.

Justice

Any man can understand *justice*. He can understand that merit is the only thing that can bring merit, and he can understand enough to do his duty to his family and all others. Generally speaking, men think the world owes them a living, opportunity, education. All that we need to consider is that we owe the world our service.

—R.C.

THE SILENT PARTNER

WHAT are the enduring factors in the evolution of Nature and of all natures?

Many indeed are the answers given and accepted, but none can be regarded as satisfactory because none of them explains or ever can explain the mysteries of being. Beneath the authoritative finalities of theological dogma one can easily perceive that the priest in the pulpit is no more at home than the parishioners in the pews. Hence the constant succession of sects, the ever-shifting congregations of believers in some revealer and his revelation.

Perhaps in this universally evident fact lies the first of the keys—the key of Paradox or duality. Observe, say, the Determinism of the mechanistic thinkers of every age, the Will of a God or Gods of the religious-minded, or the Free-Will of man as wrestled with by the philosophers. The fact that three such antipathetic and fundamentally irreconcilable views of evolution as these persist in the face of the same phenomena of human existence should show the adherents of each of these three systems that there is something lacking in them all—which in the end forces each to vacate or repair his premises of thought. When we trace the growth of the tree of knowledge in any leader or follower it will be found that the trunk of each system is rooted in the other two. The Materialist of today was the Theologian of yesterday, is striving with all his mental might in the direction of the Philosopher of tomorrow, even though he knows it not. All three of the main streams of thought trace back to a common source—Mind in different states or stages of unfoldment.

This common source is not perceived, cannot be perceived, by those whose voyage is still outward bound. Whatever the current on which anyone is embarked, he has to reverse the direction of his thought if he would ever find the source, the point of departure. Religion, Science, Philosophy, stand to each other in the psychological world as solid, liquid, gas, stand to each other in the physical universe. In both extremes what is actually perceived and assumed to be the "reality" is merely "phenomenal." In both worlds they do but represent states—states continually in process of transformation, the one into the other. These transformations are produced or induced in an unending and unbroken sequence. "Law," or "Karma," or "God," are all attempts to picture to oneself or another the invisible counterpart of visible changes—the presence of a Principle that is infinite and invariable in the midst of the finite and the transitory.

This Principle of Continuity is what is to be sought for, in oneself and in all that we perceive and in which we participate. The search at once removes the power of perception from the contemplation of the phenomena of the physical world—if one is a Materialist. Equally it transfers the same power in the religious man from the phenomena which in their totality constitute the psychological universe. And likewise the mind of the philosopher is by the same inquiry transported from the consideration of the phenomenal self to the contemplation of the possible nature of the Self which is aware of the enduring in the midst of the evanescent. In either case the actual resultant is that the Mind in man becomes the object of attention, where hitherto it has been employed as if it were itself the subject. Those who have experienced this essay, this flight of the Self or Soul from the "gravitational field" of religion, science, philosophy—these need no proof or evidence of the sublime Verity of which all human utterance is but the echo.

Few extricate their thoughts from the antennae of the senses so as to ask themselves, What is the actual nature of this world in which I live and in which my mind is the prisoner of its impressions? Here and there, in the career of the greatest of the materialistic scientists, their own recorded statements show them interrupted in their habitual pursuit, unconsciously to themselves, to the point where they could but ask themselves questions that all their knowledge of the world of physical phenomena could only obtrude, not answer. Thus thrust alive out of their world of life, these great scientists became for the moment "as a little child." One has but to read, say, the occasional truly autobiographical utterances of such men as Spencer, Huxley, Tyndall, of the generation immediately preceding our own, or of Bertrand Russell, Julian Huxley, Jeans, Bohr, Einstein, Millikan and many, many other shining lights of the science of today. One and all, though their whole consciousness is centered in "science" as they travel its crystal mazes, they find themselves ever and anon forced to recognize, if but for an instant, that all their facts and all their hard-earned knowledge, all their speculative energies, have merely multiplied the already more than encompassing labyrinths of thought. Each has glimpsed at furthest end only a cul-de-sac for the future as for the past. Who could sanely hope to live a purposive existence in an aimless world? Who can doubt that the world of Materialism is confessedly a meaningless world?

It is so, because the senses afford no spectral glimpse of anything but objects—objects which afford no clue to their entrance or their

exit. This word "objects" is itself but a name for the mass of sense-impressions. Thrust for a moment outside and beyond the periphery of the senses, the scientist is hopelessly homeless on the plains of space. He has no longer any orbit of thought. Like a child, he hastens to resume the only relation, the only round of action with which he is familiar. Yet in that perilous instant when, out of one world, he might enter another, it is possible for anyone to take note that the synthetic value of all sense-impressions is, simply, resident in non-sense perception. There is no physical world, no chemical, electrical, inorganic or organic world, no world of atoms, protons, neutrons, what not. These in their turn are but mere words, mere names for reflections in the labyrinth of mind from the crystal mirrors of the five senses. The Mind is a non-sense world in itself, as the world of sense-impressions is in itself devoid of substantiality. The "three-dimensional" world is not a sense-world. The senses offer evidence only of a formless or of a two-dimensional universe. They testify to nothing but the actuality of a certain mode of perception which includes the appearance, presence, disappearance and reappearance of dimensions in a dimensionless space.

Matter, force, energy, are terms by means of which we endeavor to translate and transform sense-impressions into mental perceptions of such a nature as to enable us to re-create the world of sense-objects. We are doing this all the time subjectively, *i. e.,* mentally, using what we call memory, imagination, thought, the world of inner "objects"—doing it with such intensity of absorption that we utterly fail to observe the correlative nature of Mind and Sense. Thus we study neither for what it is, a mere "gravitational field" of self. Whether "objects" of sense or "subjects" of mind, self is the silent partner in both transactions—a partner who makes of himself at best but a mere accountant, hoping some day to be "taken into the firm," instead of recognizing that he is in truth being "taken in" all the time by his own entries in his Life-Ledger. Just as in accounting, so in human existence—every debit has its corresponding and correlative credit. Mind and sense are the double-entry records of one and the same items which in their totality constitute the business of life—as we live it.

What applies to the sense-world applies equally to the psychological. If the sense-world is what so many imagine and believe it to be, the only tangible inventory of values, then any ideas apart from it must necessarily appear as intangibles, mere "good will" assets. If the world of psychic impressions is taken to be the "reality," then the testimony of the physical senses can only seem to be the evidence

of false witnesses. Either position is an impossible one, as becomes clear from the fact that the attorneys of each are continually upsetting and being upset upon cross-examination.

The philosopher observes this as a silent partner in the outcome of the litigation, and so, concerns himself not only with the testimony, but with the "law in the case." This third attitude of mind enables him to see, in part at least, that the difficulty inheres in the opposing points of view, not in the "hard facts." Behind the phenomena of the senses and the mind are Mind and Sense themselves. Are these possible of examination, and if so, by what means?

To this question modern science no more affords an answer than does any of the religions, and the best of our philosophers find themselves in a formless universe as intangible to the psychic as to the physical senses. It is as if one were asleep and still awake; as though one were dead, yet alive. Like the materialist and the religionist, the would-be philosopher makes haste to retreat within the confines of one or the other of the orbits of human consciousness. Yet at least he has experienced the awe-inspiring fact that his consciousness is not contingent upon the phenomenal universe of either the senses or the mind.

Why does the materialist cling to the world of sense-perception, the spiritualist to the psychic, the philosopher to both? Why do not all alike recognize that self is the silent partner in every subject and object? This is the great Paradox of human existence, that men fear to face Life as each knows that he must in the end face Death; that so few men will to live naked, as they know that they were born and as they know they will die. Yet every man has in him the capacity for self-*knowledge* by virtue of the fact that he is self-*conscious*. Each is capable of the refinement of his power of perception till he sees and knows for himself that he is the silent partner of all humanity, Humanity itself with all the other Kingdoms in Nature. There is no detriment or loss in this pursuit, no sense of separateness or isolation. The illusions of mind and sense dissolve and disappear—disappear as Darkness disappears on the coming of the Light. The Divine SELF is recognized as the Silent Partner in human life, and the uttered words of all the sages and saviors of the race are heard for what they are—The Voice of the Silence.

"In those for whom knowledge of the true Self has dispersed ignorance, the Supreme as if lighted by the sun, is revealed."

THE TIDAL WAVE

"The tidal wave of deeper souls,
Into our inmost being rolls,
And lifts us unawares,
Out of all meaner cares."
—LONGFELLOW.

[H. P. Blavatsky wrote this prophetic article as the editorial for *Lucifer* of November, 1889. It now appears in THEOSOPHY for the second time, having been reprinted in Volume II at page 446. Little need be said in introduction; the value and profound implication of the article are self-evident. Nowhere has H. P. B. made clearer the Olympian character of the intellectual and moral struggle which raged during the cycle of her work in the world—the struggle of the Spirit in Man to be free. There are statements in this article bearing import of a destiny for which the die has been cast. For those who regard the scroll of theosophical and world history since the critical year of 1889, that destiny is mixed, must seem obscure. The *full* meaning of "The Tidal Wave" will become manifest but gradually, as the cycle matures. Yet one thing is certain: the struggle continues unabated. Although the forces which half a century ago were clearly outlined against the horizon are now but looming shadows and faintly glowing lights, they have not died, nor is the battle over. The past records directions taken, but the "Tidal Wave" ever rolls on into the future, now triumphant, now hidden, in the direction *given*.—Editors.]

THE great psychic and spiritual change now taking place in the realm of the human Soul, is quite remarkable. It began towards the very commencement of the now slowly vanishing last quarter of our century, and will end—so says a mystic prophecy—either for the weal or the woe of civilized humanity with the present cycle which will close in 1897. But the great change is not effected in solemn silence, nor is it perceived only by the few. On the contrary, it asserts itself amid a loud din of busy, boisterous tongues, a clash of public opinion, in comparison to which the incessant, ever increasing roar even of the noisiest political agitation seems like the rustling of the young forest foliage, on a warm spring day.

Verily the Spirit in man, so long hidden out of public sight, so carefully concealed and so far exiled from the arena of modern learning, has at last awakened. It now asserts itself and is loudly re-demanding its unrecognized yet ever legitimate rights. It refuses

to be any longer trampled under the brutal foot of Materialism, speculated upon by the Churches, and made a fathomless source of income by those who have self-constituted themselves its universal custodians. The former would deny the Divine Presence any right to existence; the latter would accentuate and prove it through their Sidesmen and Church Wardens armed with money-bags and collection-boxes. But the Spirit in man—the direct, though now but broken ray and emanation of the Universal Spirit—has at last awakened. Hitherto, while so often reviled, persecuted and abased through ignorance, ambition and greed; while so frequently turned by insane *Pride* "into a blind wanderer, like unto a buffoon mocked by a host of buffoons," in the realm of Delusion, it remained unheard and unheeded. Today, the Spirit in man has returned like King Lear, from seeming insanity to its senses; and, raising its voice, it now speaks in those authoritative tones to which the men of old have listened in reverential silence through incalculable ages, until deafened by the din and roar of civilization and culture, they could hear it no longer. . . .

Look around you and behold! Think of what you see and hear, and draw therefrom your conclusions. The age of crass materialism, of Soul insanity and blindness, is swiftly passing away. A death struggle between Mysticism and Materialism is no longer at hand, but is already raging. And the party which will win the day at this supreme hour will become the master of the situation and of the future; *i. e.,* it will become the autocrat and sole disposer of the *millions* of men already born and to be born, up to the latter end of the twentieth century. If the signs of the times can be trusted it is not the *Animalists* who will remain conquerors. This is warranted us by the many brave and prolific authors and writers who have arisen of late to defend the rights of Spirit to reign over matter. Many are the honest, aspiring Souls now raising themselves like a dead wall against the torrent of the muddy waters of Materialism. And facing the hitherto domineering flood which is still steadily carrying off into unknown abysses the fragments from the wreck of the dethroned, cast down Human Spirit, they now command: "So far hast thou come; but thou shalt go no further!"

Amid all this external discord and disorganization of social harmony; amid confusion and the weak and cowardly hesitations of the masses, tied down to the narrow frames of routine, propriety and cant; amid that late dead calm of public thought that had exiled from literature every reference to Soul and Spirit and their divine working during the whole of the middle period of our century—we

hear a sound arising. Like a clear, definite, far-reaching note of promise, the voice of the great human Soul proclaims, in no longer timid tones, the rise and almost the resurrection of the human Spirit in the masses. It is now awakening in the foremost representatives of thought and learning; it speaks in the lowest as in the highest, and stimulates them all to action. The renovated, life-giving Spirit in man is boldly freeing itself from the dark fetters of the hitherto all-capturing animal life and matter. Behold it, saith the poet, as, ascending on its broad, white wings, it soars into the regions of real life and light; whence, calm and godlike, it contemplates with unfeigned pity those golden idols of the modern material cult with their feet of clay, which have hitherto screened from the purblind masses their true and living gods. . . .

Literature—once wrote a critic—is the confession of social life, reflecting all its sins, and all its acts of baseness as of heroism. In this sense a book is of a far greater importance than any man. Books do not represent one man, but they are the mirror of a host of men. Hence the great English poet-philosopher said of books, that he knew that they were as hard to kill and as prolific as the teeth of the fabulous dragon; sow them hither and thither and armed warriors will grow out of them. To kill a good book, is equal to killing a man.

The "poet-philosopher" is right.

A new era has begun in literature, this is certain. New thoughts and new interest have created new intellectual needs; hence a new race of authors is springing up. And this new species will gradually and imperceptibly shut out the old one, those fogies of yore who, though they still reign nominally, are allowed to do so rather by force of habit than predilection. It is not he who repeats obstinately and parrot-like the old literary formulae and holds desperately to publishers' traditions, who will find himself answering to the new needs; not the man who prefers his narrow party discipline to the search for the long-exiled Spirit of man and the now lost TRUTHS; not these, but verily he who, parting company with his beloved "authority," lifts boldly and carries on unflinchingly the standard of the *Future Man.* It is finally those who, amidst the present wholesale dominion of the worship of matter, material interests and SELFISHNESS, will have bravely fought for human rights and *man's divine nature,* who will become, if they only win, the teachers of the masses in the coming century, and so their benefactors.

But woe to the twentieth century if the now reigning school of thought prevails, for Spirit would once more be made captive and

silenced till the end of the now coming age. It is not the fanatics of the dead letter in general, nor the iconoclasts and Vandals who fight the new Spirit of thought, nor yet the modern Roundheads, supporters of the old Puritan religious and social traditions, who will ever become the protectors and Saviours of the now resurrecting human thought and Spirit. It is not these too willing supporters of the old cult, and the mediaeval heresies of those who guard like a relic every error of their sect or party, who jealously watch over their own thought lest it should, growing out of its teens, assimilate some fresher and more beneficent idea—not these who are the wise men of the future. It is not for them that the hour of the new historical era will have struck, but for those who will have learnt to express and put into practice the aspirations as well as the physical needs of the rising generations and of the now trampled-down masses. In order that one should fully comprehend *individual* life with its physiological, psychic and spiritual mysteries, he has to devote himself with all the fervour of unselfish philanthropy and love for his brother men, to studying and knowing *collective* life, or Mankind. Without preconceptions or prejudice, as also without the least fear of possible results in one or another direction, he has to decipher, understand and *remember* the deep and innermost feelings and the aspirations of the poor people's great and suffering heart. To do this he has first "to attune his soul with that of Humanity," as the old philosophy teaches; to thoroughly master the correct meaning of every line and word in the rapidly turning pages of the Book of Life of MANKIND and to be thoroughly saturated with the truism that the latter is a whole inseparable from his own SELF.

How many of such profound readers of life may be found in our boasted age of sciences and culture? Of course we do not mean authors alone, but rather the practical and still unrecognized, though well known, philanthropists and altruists of our age; the people's friends, the unselfish lovers of man, and the defenders of human right to the freedom of Spirit. Few indeed are such; for they are the rare blossoms of the age, and generally the martyrs to prejudiced mobs and time-servers. Like those wonderful "Snow flowers" of Northern Siberia, which, in order to shoot forth from the cold frozen soil, have to pierce through a thick layer of hard, icy snow, so these rare characters have to fight their battles all their life with cold indifference and human harshness, and with the selfish ever-mocking world of wealth. Yet, it is only they who can carry out the task of perseverance. To them alone is given the mission of

turning the "Upper Ten" of social circles from the broad and easy highway of wealth, vanity and empty pleasures into the arduous and thorny path of higher moral problems, and the perception of loftier moral duties than they are now pursuing. It is also those who, already themselves awakened to a higher Soul activity, are being endowed at the same time with literary talent, whose duty it is to undertake the part of awakening the sleeping Beauty and the Beast, in their enchanted Castle of Frivolity, to real life and light. Let all those who can, proceed fearlessly with this idea uppermost in their mind, and they will succeed. It is the rich who have first to be regenerated, if we would do good to the poor; for it is in the former that lies the root of evil of which the "disinherited" classes are but the too luxuriant growth. This may seem at first sight paradoxical, yet it is true, as may be shown.

In the face of the present degradation of every ideal, as also of the noblest aspirations of the human heart, becoming each day more prominent in the higher classes, what can be expected from the "great unwashed"? It is the head that has to guide the feet, and the latter are to be hardly held responsible for their actions. Work, therefore, to bring about the moral regeneration of the cultured but far more immoral classes before you attempt to do the same for our ignorant younger Brethren. The latter was undertaken years ago, and is carried on to this day, yet with no perceptible good results. Is it not evident that the reason for this lies in the fact that [except] for a few earnest, sincere and all-sacrificing workers in that field, the great majority of the volunteers consists of those same frivolous, *ultra*-selfish classes, who "play at charity" and whose ideas of the amelioration of the physical and moral status of the poor are confined to the hobby that money and the Bible alone can do it. We say that neither of these can accomplish any good; for dead-letter preaching and forced Bible-reading develop irritation and later atheism, and money as a temporary help finds its way into the tills of the public-houses rather than serves to buy bread with. The root of evil lies, therefore, in a moral, not in a physical cause.

If asked, what is it then that will help, we answer boldly: — Theosophical literature; hastening to add that under this term, neither books concerning adepts and phenomena, nor the Theosophical Society publications are meant.

Take advantage of, and profit by, the "tidal wave" which is now happily overpowering half of Humanity. Speak to the awakening Spirit of Humanity, to the human Spirit and the Spirit in man, these three in One and the One in All. Dickens and Thackeray both born

a century too late—or a century too early—came between two tidal waves of human spiritual thought, and though they have done yeoman service individually and induced certain partial reforms, yet they failed to touch Society and the masses at large. What the European world now needs is a dozen writers such as Dostoevsky, the Russian author, whose works, though *terra incognita* for most, are still well known on the Continent, as also in England and America among the cultured classes. And what the Russian novelist has done is this: — he spoke boldly and fearlessly the most unwelcome truths to the higher and *even to the official classes* — the latter a far more dangerous proceeding than the former. And yet, behold, most of the administrative reforms during the last twenty years are due to the silent and *unwelcome* influence of his pen. As one of his critics remarks, the great truths uttered by him were felt by all classes so vividly and so strongly that people whose views were most diametrically opposed to his own could not but feel the warmest sympathy for this bold writer and even expressed it to him.

> In the eyes of all, friends or foes, he became the mouthpiece of the irrepressible no longer to be delayed need felt by Society, to look with absolute sincerity into the innermost depths of its own soul, to become the impartial judge of its own actions and its own aspirations.
>
> Every new current of thought, every new tendency of the age had and ever will have, its rivals, as its enemies, some counteracting it boldly but unsuccessfully, others with great ability. But such, are always made of the same paste, so to say, common to all. They are goaded to resistance and objections by the same external, selfish and worldly objects, the same material ends and calculations as those that guided their opponents. While pointing out other problems and advocating other methods, in truth, they cease not for one moment to live with their foes in a world of the same and common interests, as also to continue in the same fundamental identical views on life.
>
> That which then became necessary was a man, who, standing outside of any partisanship or struggle for supremacy, would bring his past life as a guarantee of the sincerity and honesty of his views and purposes; one whose personal suffering would be an *imprimatur* to the firmness of his convictions, a writer finally, of undeniable literary genius: — for such a man alone, could pronounce words capable of awakening the true spirit in a Society which had drifted away in a wrong direction.
>
> Just such a man was Dostoevsky—the patriot-convict, the galley-slave, returned from Siberia; that writer, far-famed in

> Europe and Russia, the pauper buried by voluntary subscription, the soul-stirring bard, of everything poor, insulted, injured, humiliated; he who unveiled with such merciless cruelty the plagues and sores of his age. . . .

It is writers of this kind that are needed in our day of re-awakening; not authors writing for wealth or fame, but fearless apostles of the living Word of Truth, moral healers of the pustulous sores of our century. France has her Zola who points out, brutally enough, yet still true to life—the degradation and moral leprosy of his people. But Zola, while castigating the vices of the lower classes, has never dared to lash higher with his pen than the *petite bourgeoisie,* the immorality of the higher classes being ignored by him. Result: the peasants who do not read novels have not been in the least affected by his writings, and the *bourgeoisie* caring little for the *plebs,* took such notice of *Pot bouille* as to make the French realist lose all desire of burning his fingers again at their family pots. From the first then, Zola has pursued a path which though bringing him to fame and fortune has led him nowhere in so far as salutary effects are concerned.

Whether Theosophists, in the present or future, will ever work out a practical application of the suggestion is doubtful. To write novels with a moral sense in them deep enough to stir Society, requires a great literary talent and a *born* theosophist as was Dostoevsky — Zola standing outside of any comparison with him. But such talents are rare in all countries. Yet, even in the absence of such great gifts one may do good in a smaller and humbler way by taking note and exposing in impersonal narratives the crying vices and evils of the day, by word and deed, by publications and practical example. Let the force of that example impress others to follow it; and then instead of deriding our doctrines and aspirations the men of the twentieth, if not the nineteenth century will see clearer, and judge with knowledge and according to facts instead of prejudging agreeably to rooted misconceptions. Then and not till then will the world find itself forced to acknowledge that it was wrong, and that Theosophy alone can gradually create a mankind as harmonious and as simple-souled as Kosmos itself; but to effect this theosophists have to act as such. Having helped to awaken the spirit in many a man—we say this boldly challenging contradiction —shall we now stop instead of swimming with the TIDAL WAVE?

PHILOSOPHY AND CONDUCT

MAN represents the creative power of all nature. He is able to conceive and construct what he will, subject only to the limitations of his own self-development. Whatever man creates begins on the plane of ideation. Ideas arise, sometimes prompted by external stimuli, sometimes originating in the higher part of the mind, and become germinal seeds. Brought to fruition, these creative ideas have become the inspired writings, the great paintings and works of architecture, the revolutionary inventions of past and present. The "greatness" of any individual is proportionate to his exercise of creative power. Lesser men, reflecting lesser ideas, nonetheless call into use the same faculty. Ideas gained from the writings or speech of others are given a new meaning by the formative faculty in our own minds.

Those who reflect on the moving power of ideas have seen, as did Plato, that "Ideas rule the world." It is possible to extend this perception, as every great Theosophist has done, to a realization that all the conditions affecting and afflicting man are the result of his own creation through ideas. Things thought, as well as said and done, stand behind our present tendencies as the secret of their origin. Past thoughts live in the present as the attributes of character.

Any and all ideas, then, are important in relation to man's creative faculty. Beliefs which one holds regarding his own nature, his ideas about himself, are directly formative of character and conduct. As a man thinks himself to be, so will he be influenced to act. Yet what of the man who professes a philosophy destitute of all noble ideals, while his conduct exhibits the highest altruism and unselfishness? And what of the exponent of "high philosophy" who tramples his fellow beings in the mire in order to gain self-advancement? The socialists, communists and like advocates of economic and social reform point to such illustrations as proof that man's condition can never be improved by philosophy—by mere ideas. Must we, in view of this discouraging disparity between profession and practice, abandon the view that right philosophy will settle the world's problems? This issue must be faced, for it stands squarely at the crossroads where the methods of the environmental reformer and of the theosophist diverge. An explanation must be sought, else

the majority of well-meaning people will continue support of attempts to "put new wine into old bottles." Political and economic panaceas without number will be tried, with a general neglect of philosophies founded primarily on ideas of soul and spirit.

Why is it often hard to see the connection between a man's philosophy, especially one lately adopted, and his conduct in life? If we analyze our own nature we may see that any idea, whether arising from reflection or adopted from some "system" or group of ideas called a philosophy, merely *suggests* action. That is all that any idea can do. If we mentally accept a certain philosophy, we gradually become aware of its implications when brought down to the plane of our everyday living. Yet the habits of action which are the results of past ideas remain. The new philosophy often is only "superimposed" for a time upon our plane of mental being. Behind that plane is yet another, the plane of character. Character is the cumulative result of past thought and action—of philosophies of life, mayhap, held in the past. Our choices always lie between a way of living toward which we gravitate through past experience and a way suggested by the ideas of our fellows or by our own further reflection.

Very few men show a thorough integration of philosophy and character. If this integration is complete, whether in the case of either altruist or egoist, he becomes perfected—either in good or in evil. But by what process does this integration take place?

Ideas, as philosophies, are food for the mind. The mind of man, however, has two aspects. One aspect, the purely intellectual, can deal in brilliant academic fashion with the so-called "problems" of philosophy, while never establishing contact with the real man or true character. For this reason it is said that intellect alone is hard, cold and selfish; thus also we find many professing intellectual doctrines of the most complete materialism, while inwardly cherishing ideals of a much higher nature. There is in every man an intellectual nature and an intuitional nature, lower Manas and Buddhi; there is also the bridge or antaskarana between them—higher mind. Through higher mind we are able to perceive both the intellectual and the intuitional—and relate the two.

The materialist whose conduct betokens a better philosophy has made no recent use of higher mind, since his merely intellectual conceptions cannot arouse the higher faculties. Yet he acts at times on the basis of soul intuition, though there is nothing in his philosophy to justify such action. Higher mind, however, receiving no food, slumbers, and its function as a bridge between the intellect

and soul knowledge atrophies. As this process continues the man gradually becomes a materialist "*in actu* and not merely in name." For such an one, the seed of a true philosophy, carefully sown, may prove the greatest permanent blessing, for his higher mind may be awakened and establish connection with now latent noble ideals of the soul. If this broader purview is regained, his intellectual materialism will be rejected as the bright light of a higher perspective exposes its limitations. Higher mind will then regain the energy previously drained from it by its lower reflection, Kama-manas, as it is fed the fuel gained from a philosophy involving the highest ideals.

What, then, of those who adopt and profess philosophies of altruism, while their conduct exhibits a continuation of petty selfishness? Here the dormant spark of Buddhi-Manas is slowly being fanned to a flame by one now on the upward arc once more. But the man's energy has been so long concentrated upon the selfish illusion of separateness that the climb is not easy. It is the more difficult since he may firmly believe he is living according to the highest philosophy, while merely rationalizing indulgence of his own desires. Yet if sincerity is present, conflicts between personal desires and high ideals will inevitably come about, and one can not lose all such battles. Here the intellect performs a gradual leavening that will at the same time stir more and more the hitherto neglected potentialities of higher Manas. Indeed, the principles of man are a seven-stringed lyre upon which he plays, and from each it is possible to call forth what is needful and helpful. Continued emphasis upon high philosophy must bring realization of this, even with those beings as yet incapable of living it fully.

Philosophy, then, as collections of *ideas* upon fundamental subjects, is germinal either for good or evil, those ideas being by their very nature creative and formative. Every man is a philosopher: to be a man means to consider transcendental issues, even if only by denying the importance of such problems. Most men, however, have assimilated their intellectual philosophy but partially. Those who completely embody the highest philosophy have begun existence on another and higher plane of consciousness; they can be no longer affected by the illusions of this plane of separateness. Their ideas are neither superimposed nor artificial, for they are *lived*, so that the creative power resident in them is utilized to the full.

YOUTH-COMPANIONS' FORUM

SHOULD *one fulfill the obligations of an oath if one later sees the mistake in taking it?*

(*a*) Theosophy lays down general principles for the student on matters of conduct, but each one must make his own particular applications. This is itself the process and the necessity of human evolution; though the Source is one and the goal is one, the path varies with the pilgrim. The Teacher gives guiding principles, and the learner, by applying them, makes them his own. Otherwise, the hard and fast conclusions laid down would confine, limit and interfere with the student's freedom of choice.

Theosophy teaches regarding an oath, or any kind of promise, that we should not give our word unless we intend to carry it out. Adoption of this principle would have a salutary effect in reducing mere lip-promises and oaths taken in a burst of emotional enthusiasm.

Always in Theosophy we have to consider our motive, to use our discrimination and take into consideration as many factors as we possibly can. There is really no limit to our responsibility, for the interdependence of all beings gives our actions, even the most casual, a truly infinite range.

If we think we have made a mistake, then let us examine our motive. If our motive is for the good of others, we can always correct a course that now seems to be wrong. We need to be honest with respect to oaths and promises we make to ourselves. As Mr. Judge says, "The promises I made to myself are just as binding as any others."

(*b*) The annals of history relate that great men have at all times upheld the sacredness of an oath, pledge, vow, or promise. This ideal has not altogether faded from the minds and hearts of men, for we find it expressed in many ways. It is engraved on the stone entablature of the Los Angeles City Hall, as expressed in the words of Cicero: "He that violates his oath violates the Divinity of Faith itself."

But is one never justified in freeing himself from the obligations of an oath taken in ignorance? This question involves a consideration of who it is that took the oath, and who sees the error of it; also the motive in taking, and breaking the oath, which includes the nature of the Cause to which one has pledged himself, and one's conduct toward the person or party involved in the oath which is to be dissolved.

If the Higher Self is the inspiration and force behind the vow, and if the eye of Self sees directly the true relationship of cause and effect, how could there be the possibility of error in judgment? Surely the source of error lies elsewhere.

What kind of oaths could involve an error in judgment, since there can be no error in vows or oaths taken for a Universal Cause. Whenever there is the taint of selfishness, both the oath and its results are bound to be saturated with error to the degree of that selfishness. The motive, good or bad, is always the driving force behind the oaths taken in our daily dealings with our fellowmen. From the small promise, such as that of doing some special favor for a friend, keeping an appointment or paying a visit, to the highest vow of service and sacrifice, there is always the opportunity for developing habits of promptness, trustworthiness, discrimination, and the power of Will, which prepares the soul for vows of greater responsibility. This is beautifully exemplified in the pledge of Kwan-Yin:

> Never will I seek nor receive private, individual salvation; never will I enter into Final Peace alone; but forever, and everywhere, will I live and strive for the redemption of every creature throughout the world.

But if at some time it seems necessary to withdraw from an oath or promise, one may still fulfil his moral obligation by asking to be released, or, finally, by informing the pledgee ahead of time of the intention of withdrawal, with a statement of the reason. Even in the case of the oath taken by an accomplice in crime, such an one might have a sudden change of heart, with the consequence of deciding between two alternatives; that of running away, thus adding to his moral debt, or that of facing his leader, and accepting whatever penalty may be in store for him.

In *The Key To Theosophy,* H. P. B. quotes the following from the *Path:*

> *A Pledge once taken, is forever binding in both the moral and the occult worlds.* If we break it once and are punished, that does not justify us in breaking it again, and so long as we do, so long will the mighty lever of the Law (of Karma) react upon us. (*Key,* p. 51, orig. ed.)

(*c*) Illustrations should help us to get at this problem. Suppose a man has sworn to serve his country in war, and that this oath was taken in a spirit of the noblest patriotism. Let us then imagine that his nation becomes embroiled in a sordid commercial struggle, and he is ordered to fight against a people that have harmed neither his

nation nor himself, but who have possessions his government desires. He made the promise to fight out of love for country. He loved his country for the ideals he thought it represented. Now those ideals are forgotten, yet his oath, which made no mention of ideals, remains. Legally, he is bound to fight. Yet to fight is the very negation of the spirit of his oath. Suppose this man has such a high regard for *any* pledged word that he resolves to fight in this unworthy war. He fights, perhaps he kills, at the same time suffering terribly because of the sense of conflicting duties. Has this man done right or wrong? Where, in all the infinite extent of the universe, is the being who would *dare* condemn him? He has lived up to the highest he knows. He faced the Karma of an unwise pledge, or of a pledge which was part of his national Karma as he saw it. He will in like spirit face the Karma of his participation in an unjust war. A nation which possesses such citizens may eventually find in them the moral power to turn away from selfish ways.

What of another man who takes a different course? Suppose this one, having bound himself by the same oath, decides that the bond is a degradation to the soul that made it; that the pledge is invalidated by its ignoble application. Clear-eyed, he is willing to take the consequences on this or any plane of his broken vow. That is his duty as he sees it. Who is to say he is wrong?

In both these cases, the one who pledged himself has learned a lesson of enormous value: that a pledge is a consecration of the highest in man, and none save the highest objective is worthy of the efforts and fidelity of the true Self. Both have learned that the only true pledge is that which commits the soul to unceasing love and labor for all that live. Never will they assume any lesser obligation, except as these may be partial contributions to the great ideal. It is by taking the consequences of our mistaken judgments that we gain better judgment. A promise is a judgment we have made as to what is right to do. Thus the keeping of a promise is *in principle* continuing to do what seems right. If we have to destroy the *forms* of our old views of right action—promises made in the past—then we should be glad to meet the pain that nearly every destruction involves, whether physical or moral. We may have to break the *form* of an oath to our country in order to keep its spirit. Suppose this should bring us disgrace, the contempt of our fellows—even death. What of it? The day will come when our countrymen will honor the principle for which we stood, instead of its dead form. Our loyalty, in spite of all, will have been the seed which ultimately flowered in them. This consummation may not be until ages have

passed, and on other lands than where we are now incarnated, but come it will, and we will have helped to bring it about. Our pledge we took as though our self was their self, too; we lived it, and now they live it also, because the light of the One Self has dawned in their hearts.

(*d*) In its broadest sense, an oath includes any form of promise by which an individual signifies that he is bound in conscience to perform an act. To understand the real significance of a promise we must first know the nature of the "I" that makes it. Since man is a septenary being, he must live on seven different planes, each having "its own objectivity and subjectivity, its own space and time, its own consciousness and set of senses." (*Key*, p. 89.) The obligations assumed in an oath or pledge taken on any one plane are equally binding on all the others. The complete man, a sevenfold being, with all that implies, is the one who makes the promise. Not for one life alone does such a promise hold. The personal man may perish, but the Real Man and the higher planes of consciousness extend in unbroken continuity from life to life. Thus the pledged word also continues from life to life. In each new birth the Ego must struggle to remember his past vows on the physical and personal plane.

Because people realize that the personal self is weak, and because they identify themselves with this false self, they feel impelled to call upon some outside power to witness the truth of what they are about to declare. All such oaths were prohibited by Pythagoras. The *Golden Verses* say, "We ought so to live that all men will believe our bare word. " The wise know that man need call upon no *outside* witness. The man who makes a true pledge calls upon an inner witness, his own Higher Self.

The keeping of one's word, however slight the matter, is a part of the soul's honesty and sense of justice to his fellows and to himself. To be known as "a man of his word" was never a small honor. But promises made to others are often easier to keep than the promises we make to ourselves. We do not like others to say of us, "He never keeps his word," while we think "nobody knows" about the promises made to ourselves. Mr. Judge said, "The promises I made to myself are just as binding as any others." The Higher Self knows and will not let us forget.

A half-hearted promise is worse than no promise at all. Mr. Judge said some fifty years ago: " . . . in this nineteenth century a pledge is no good, because everyone reserves to himself the right to break it if he finds after a while that it is galling, or that it puts him

in some inconsistent attitude with something he may have said or done at some other time." (*Letters* II, 67.)

An unworthy promise is the only promise we cannot keep. Under the sway of false enthusiasm, of psychic intoxication, or under the influence of some blind leader, individuals often make rash promises, the fulfillment of which would bring woe to themselves and to humanity. We must, however, face the Karma of breaking even unwise pledges. Sometimes people believe they are absolved from carrying out a pledge when they find it difficult or burdensome. But the wise go through with it, despite suffering and inconvenience to themselves. In the story of the Knights of the Round Table, King Arthur faced the ruin of his beloved Round Table Group because during his absence his impetuous knights had taken vows to seek the Holy Grail. He told them frankly that they were not ready for that quest. But, he said, having bound themselves, they must keep, even through pain and grief, their solemn word. In Theosophical teachings students are encouraged not to take oaths or vows until they have carefully considered such a step. The world thinks lightly of vows, but Theosophy shows the seriousness of every promise.

I notice that the contributors to this Department write intimately and with great assurance about events said to have occurred millions of years ago, and speak familiarly of the conditions supposed to be entered by man after death. Is the reader to infer that the statements made are the result of first-hand information?

(*a*) So far as first-hand *information* is concerned, the answer is "yes," because in the case of the present writer all the answers contributed have been derived, to the best of his ability, from the original teachings of Theosophy as given in the writings of H. P. Blavatsky and William Q. Judge, in works they recommended or in complete accord with their own, such as Mr. Crosbie's. The writer does not write as a "person," but only repeats the teaching.

Now, concerning *knowledge,* there is a different answer. *Knowledge* is what one knows in, by, and through himself. To speak with direct knowledge of a civilization that existed millions of years ago would mean that the student remembered his past incarnations. To assert individual memory of the states after death would be a claim of conscious immortality on the part of the student. We may regard all such claimants in the light of the principle that "those who know don't tell, and those who tell don't know."

However, there is knowledge and conviction in the "Forum" answers. The Fundamental Propositions of *The Secret Doctrine* are demonstrable to anyone who will take the trouble to prove them

to himself. They are inherently reasonable, as H. P. B. says, and the truth of them is on every hand, evident in the laws of Nature working without and within the student himself.

H. P. B. states that upon the apprehension of these Fundamental Propositions depends an understanding of all that follows. This means that all that follows in her great work is particularization and elaboration of these principles.

(*b*) In considering this question let us recall that there are two ways of gaining knowledge, and that *knowledge* is always "first-hand." Knowledge of the facts implied in the question could not possibly be gained in one short lifetime, but necessitates many incarnations. The knowledge thus gained is retained by the real inner man.

"But," it might be asked, "how do we know even this to be a fact?" Our certainty in this is intuitive and rational. It is Faith based on knowledge of principles which have never failed us. Intuitive faith grows into first-hand knowledge gradually, as a result of living the life those principles indicate. Direct knowledge of Brotherhood and Universal Law is obtained by making altruism a fact in our everyday lives, by "acting for and as the Self," and remembering that we are one with the Self of all.

Let us consider the student of mathematics. After proving for himself the validity of that science he recognizes its truth in so far as he has gone. But he also knows that there are further propositions to be proved, and that by pursuing his study he may verify their conclusions for himself.

In the same way the student finds Theosophy to be the mathematics of the soul. In so far as he has progressed, Theosophy is rational and in accord with his own experience. The student need accept no statement on blind belief. He finds the idea of the Masters of Wisdom, of Perfected Men, to be an integral and necessary part of a true philosophy of life. He recognizes through his own powers of reasoning and intuition that the writings of Their Agents, H. P. Blavatsky and W. Q. Judge, teach the mathematics of the Soul, which he is now striving to realize for himself. Their writings on any subject may be proved by anyone who will make the effort.

THE CODE OF KINDNESS

SO simple are the ways and methods of "The Masters," and so simple is their code of Honor, Justice, and Love that if any man desirous of living the Higher Life will pause and become quiet in mind and soul, he will be able to see clearly the right course of thought, life and action to take, leading to the Path which is Theirs.

Yet, all down the ages, when They have dealt directly with men regarding *themselves* as "leaders" of humanity or as superior units of the race, They have all too often found—to Their sorrow—these men sooner or later assuming themselves to be above law, above the Masters, then proceeding to trample other beings in the dust of earth, violating all the laws of brotherhood which they had professed but refused to *live*.

If Masters—who are but perfected *Men*—could weep, many are the occasions on which They, even They, would have wept copiously, as They saw those claiming to represent Them betray one after another the simplest laws of life. Is not the law of Kindness simple, although before it the Great White Lodge bows in deepest reverence and humility? Why are ordinary men so blind to the noble, good, and true in each human heart, waiting to spring into life at the magic touch of a smile, a kind word, a friendly gesture—just a *little* kindness? Many a heart has remained sad because there was no other human being to offer even so much as a friendly glance.

A *little* rain, a *little* sunlight, and lo! the plant springs forth from its hiding, soon to grow to maturity and yield its fragrance to all who pass that way. A *little* kindness, and behold the miracle of the ages, for the accomplishment of which the Gods have labored faithfully through century after century without ceasing—a human being with Love in his heart to share with some other wayfarer.

Those Gods, now offering to man the Promethean Fire, once could give but the warmth of simple kindness-to-one-another. But it brought them verily into the realm of the Divine. For ages, man has refused the Fire, preferring to sit around the cold, dry form of learning, and feed on outer husks, not even crackling flames to cheer and glorify, content with the cackling tremolo of—"This is the truth, all else is error." As well might say, "This air *we* breathe is good, all other air is foul."

Time after time the Gods have sent Their Messengers to man to remind him that Truth is universal, and that the Brotherhood of

Man is a fact in nature. They sent a Christ to say, "Love one another." They know that without love and kindness man can not *live*. H. P. Blavatsky was sent with volume upon volume of profound wisdom—science, religion, and philosophy—so that all men could at last understand the basis and purpose of life. H. P. B. brought science for the intellectual, religion for the devotional, and philosophy for those who could think.

The Theosophy of H. P. B. teaches: All life flows from One Source in which we live and move and have our being. Each individual shares with every other individual to the extent that each or any or all of them become consciously aware of their common brotherhood *at any level*. All at any one level share a common rate of vibration. The Guardians of humanity are endeavoring slowly to raise the focus of consciousness of the race-mind to the level of Higher Manas—the level of Egoic life and true being. Thus, a group of people of sufficient number, vibrating synchronously—one in will and purpose at Egoic level—would not only cause the smouldering embers of inner fires to burst into bright flame within themselves, but would set the world afire and warm the cold heart of humanity.

Must this not have been in the mind of the Great Ones when They brought together in the latter part of the past century the most promising souls of earth to form "a nucleus" of the "brotherhood of humanity"? While the original Society utterly failed in accomplishing that seemingly simple objective, and later came departures from the original teachings, yet the teachings themselves do and will remain. Sincere and earnest students may and do associate themselves together, to learn the philosophy, and teach, each according to his light, while in the spirit of mutual helpfulness in daily life, they strive to apply universal laws and principles to the harmonizing of all human relations. If the accomplishment is not simple, at least the instructions *are:* "Live the Life, and you shall know the Law."

Wherever dwells a man sincerely and steadfastly endeavoring to live the Higher Life, helpful to each one who crosses his path (and there are no "accidents" in these encounters), to him come aid and encouragement in some form or another. For *any* help given the Masters in Their thankless task, They are surely grateful. Man has been supplied in fullest measure with all the knowledge required for him to find the way. All the Gods ask is that man shall envision the path of duty and helpfulness, after the manner of the Gods, and thus make further help from Them possible.

"ELECTRICAL ARCHITECT"

THE central problem of modern biology is the origin of form. By what process do the infinitely varied structures of a complex physical organism become differentiated from the apparently simple and unorganized mass of protoplasm constituting the embryo in its early stages? Theosophy explains this miracle of development by the astral body, students endeavoring to apply this general principle to all organic processes, in particular to the process of growth. Recently the experimental investigations of scientists whose attention has for years been concentrated on this problem have led to conclusions closely approximating the Theosophical teaching. This is especially true of the findings of Drs. H. S. Burr and F. C. S. Northrop, of Yale University, who last April reported before the National Academy of Sciences the details of four years of study of the organic development of salamanders, mice, and human beings. Their paper, presented by Dr. Burr, described the electrical phenomena which accompanies all growth. The patterns of electrical activity are recorded on electrocardiographs and electroencephalographs, revealing definitive characteristics for each species. A clear, non-technical statement of the significance of these experiments is provided in a New York *Times* dispatch by William I. Lawrence, which may be condensed as follows:

> There exists in the bodies of living things an electrical architect who molds and fashions the individual after a specific predermined pattern, and remains within the body from the pre-embryonic stages until death. The electrical architect was characterized by Dr. Burr as the "real I" of the individual. All else in the body undergoes constant change; the individual myriads of cells of which the body is made, excepting the brain cells, grow old and die, to be replaced by other cells, but the electrical architect remains the only constant throughout life, building the new cells and organizing them after the same pattern of the original cells, and thus, in a literal sense, constantly recreating the body. Only when the individual dies does the architect go out of existence, said Dr. Burr. In a sense it might be said that the reverse is true—death comes to the individual after the electrical architect within him ceases to function, either because of disease or a gradual slowing down of activities to the zero point at old age.
>
> The electrical architect promises a new approach to the understanding of the nature of life and the living processes. It indicates that each living organism possesses an electro-dynamic field, just as a magnet emanates all around it a magnetic field of force. Every high school boy is familiar with the character-

istic patterns formed by a magnet set amidst iron filings. This pattern, always the same, is formed by the magnetic lines of force emanating from the poles of the magnet, causing nearly parallel lines at each pole and concentric semi-circles around the sides. Similarly, the experimental evidence shows, according to Dr. Burr, that each species of animals and very likely also the individuals within the species have their characteristic electric field, analogous to the lines of force of the magnet. This electric field, having its own pattern, fashions all the protoplasmic clay of life that comes within its sphere of influence after its image, thus personifying itself in the living flesh as the sculptor personifies his idea in stone. (New York *Times,* April 25.)

Compare with the foregoing a statement condensed from *The Ocean of Theosophy:*

> The astral body is made of matter electrical and magnetic in its essence. The astral body is the guiding model for the physical one, and all the other kingdoms have the same astral model. This theory is the only one which will answer the question how it is that the seed produces its own kind and all sentient beings bring forth their like. Biologists can only say that the facts are as we know them, but can give no reason why the acorn will never grow anything but an oak except that no man ever knew it to be otherwise.
>
> The model for the growing child in the womb is the astral body already perfect in shape before the child is born. It is on this the molecules arrange themselves until the child is complete, and the presence of the ethereal design-body will explain how the form grows into shape, how the eyes push themselves out from within to the surface of the face, and many other mysterious matters in embryology which are passed over by medical men with a description but with no explanation (pp. 39-41).

There is virtually no difference between Dr. Burr's description of the "electrical architect," and Mr. Judge's description of the astral body, except that the biologist makes the mistake of thinking that the architect is the "real I." It is, however, the "real" physical man, for as Mr. Judge says, "The astral body has in it the real organs of the outer sense organs." Scientists have for so long held that the gross physical body is the real man that it is almost refreshing to find them seeking reality one step higher in the scale of the seven principles. But they have yet a long way to go. H. P. B. wrote in *Isis Unveiled:*

> As long as exact science confines its observations to physical conditions and proceeds Aristotle-like, it certainly cannot fail. But notwithstanding that the world of matter is boundless for

> us, it still is finite; and thus materialism will turn forever in this vitiated circle, unable to soar higher than the circumference will permit. (I. 7.)

A detailed discussion of the various theories to account for organic development advanced by present-day biologists may be found in *The Riddle of Life,* by the late William McDougall. (London: Methuen, 1938.) This book is well worth a careful reading by students who desire to understand the general mental attitude and approach of modern biologists. That the limitation of Aristotelian method described by H. P. B. is not wholly unappreciated by some of these scientists is clear from a passage which Dr. McDougall quotes from Dr. Kurt Goldstein. The latter has written: "It is clear that our knowledge of the biological realm to be attained along the lines we follow can never be final and complete, that we must be content with a continual coming near to the truth." To this Dr. McDougall adds the comment: "For a complete and final knowledge is always only possible in virtue of the assumption of certain metaphysical postulates; and he [Goldstein] rejects all such postulates." (P. 168.)

Some day these proud rejectors of metaphysics may learn that the moment science attempts anything more than mere description it is asserting metaphysical doctrines which have been *assumed.* Every *explanation,* right or wrong, is an effort to account for some happening, condition or fact in terms of cause and effect, for to explain a thing is to tell what *causes* it. Now if the idea of cause and effect is to be used by science, it must give some account of what cause and effect really is. *This is metaphysics,* and it is nonsense to suppose that the idea of cause and effect is gained from physical experiment. The very act of experiment requires a preliminary idea of cause and effect. Theosophists do not belittle experiment; they urge it as the only means of gaining knowledge. But there are metaphysical as well as physical experiments. There is that experiment described in the words, "Live the Life and you will know the doctrine." There are means of arriving at a spiritual axiom from the starting point of a metaphysical assumption.

Refusal to consider metaphysical principles involves a deliberate neglect of moral principles, for intelligent morality is but the application of metaphysics to the problems of human relations. While scientists may evade this responsibility by denying concern with morality, the high authority of scientific thought is such that the common man believes that he, too, is "scientific" in his evasion of moral issues. A sense of moral responsibility, therefore, is the greatest need of our time, and only philosophy can provide it.

ON THE LOOKOUT

American Youth Not "Radical"

Owen R. Lovejoy, for years secretary of the National Child Labor Committee and now associate director of the American Youth Commission, recently told the National Conference of Social Workers that "there appears to be slight cause for the concern of anxious patriots about the radical tendencies of youth." (New York *Times,* June 20.) On the contrary, he pointed out, young Americans are rather apathetic to the issues they will be called upon to decide when they undertake the duties of citizenship.

> Extensive inquiry into the attitudes of American youth [he said] presents convincing evidence that in general they are bewildered, uninformed, not interested in the major problems that rock the nations of the world and have no decided opinions on what they believe, think or desire.
>
> Instead of radical, new or bold methods of meeting political and economic problems, more is to be feared from the lassitude of youth in current affairs.
>
> Youth now comprises at least one-third of all the unemployed employables. The entire discussion of juvenile delinquency relates to youth between 12 and 18 years of age. It is now evident that social workers and their communities have too long neglected American youth, while devoting careful attention to the needs of such other age extremes as young children and the aged, and such handicapped as the infirm, mentally diseased and feeble-minded.

Defeatist Attitude

A similarly depressing picture of America's future voters was painted earlier in the year by Dr. Caroline B. Zachry of the Progressive Education Association. (New York *Times,* April 6.) Making public the results of a five-year study of adolescents, she said that American boys and girls have a hopeless, defeatist attitude about their future. Her conclusions are based on interviews with 600 young people between 12 and 24 years of age in all parts of the country, and exhaustive study of their complete school records and physical histories. She reports a grave situation: "There is no place for youth in industry, in the professions, or in other areas. As a result, we now ask the young people to go back and remain children until we are ready for them." The study warns that "boys

and girls, afraid that they cannot be absorbed by society in a constructive capacity, are just shuffling along, without any sort of philosophy, without any hope for the future." Dr. Zachry observes:

> How very easy it would be for Hitler or any one else who came along with a program to get hold of this group. We run the risk of a kind of leadership that may be destructive to a democracy.

YOUTH'S GREATEST NEED

Most significant of all her comments is that more than anything, the youths wanted a "sense of direction," a "philosophy of life." At present they are getting neither, according to Dr. Zachry's research.

The spectacle of these millions of young people, "without a Teacher, hope, or consolation," is almost overwhelming in its tragedy. That they "want" a philosophy of life, and do not know where to find it, nor to whom to turn, is doubly painful to theosophists, who know not how to reach the great and unhappy masses of the world, young and old, to a greater extent than the present means of promulgation permit. But the imminence of this feeling of despair should have but one effect on theosophical students: it should lead to a musing on an old axiom which compresses into a few words the motive-power of every great savior—"Where there's a *Will* there's a Way."

CAMPAIGN FOR "SEX EDUCATION"

A committee of New York educators has been chosen by Dr. Harold G. Campbell, superintendent of that city's public school system, to consider the problem of sex education. (New York *Times,* June 30.) Unsolicited expressions of opinion on this controversial issue were made public by Ellsworth B. Buck, member of the committee and vice president of the New York Board of Education, which showed that about three-fourths of the parents, educators and public officials from whom letters were received favor sex instruction. Last April Mr. Buck made public a nation-wide survey on sex education, in support of his contention that an "ostrich-like" approach to the problems of illegitimacy and social disease can be tolerated no longer. He declared at that time: "I believe that sex education should be made a part of our schools. If it is undertaken here in New York City it is apt to be followed by other cities throughout the country." (*Times,* April 22). Following is a summary of the survey, which was prepared by Eugene R. Canudo, secretary to Mr. Buck:

Although conditions in New York City are bad, they are much worse in other parts of the country, according to the report. New York holds the fifth lowest place among cities of 100,000 or over with respect to its illegitimacy rate. Yonkers was found to be the top city, with only 7.42 illegitimate births for every 1,000 births.

Richmond, Va., stood at the bottom of the list, with 97.49 illegitimate births for every 1,000. The illegitimacy rate for white girls was 41.66, and for colored, 207.64.

In between Yonkers and Richmond were such cities as Chicago, Philadelphia, Baltimore, Washington and Kansas City. New York City has an illegitimacy rate of 12.67. Commenting on this fact Mr. Buck said:

"New York conditions, with their train of rape, venereal disease, abortion and incest, are less than one-third as bad as those in the average city or in the whole country."

40 Illegitimate in 1,000

In the United States about forty children in every 1,000 are born out of wedlock, half of them to girls between the ages of 15 and 19.

Five per cent of the total, or 1,800 a year, are born to child-mothers of 10 to 14, according to the report. Mr. Buck attributed a considerable proportion of adolescent sex mal-adjustments to ignorance, and said "the dank ignorance must be dispelled—the problem is too real for temporizing."

The most recent statistics, he added, show a rise of illegitimate births for the entire United States, a decided increase in cities over 10,000, a slight increase in rural areas and a decrease in small towns of 2,500 to 10,000.

Arguing for sex instruction in the schools, Mr. Buck said that it is "precisely because parents refuse or are unequipped to perform this duty that the present conditions have arisen." Unless proper instruction is given in the schools, the educators will help to perpetuate a "dangerous and costly ignorance—costly in terms of human health and happiness for our growing generations," he added.

"Mere illegitimacy statistics present a comparatively mild side of the whole picture," Mr. Buck noted. Mr. Canudo found indications of abortion, incest and compulsory prostitution among school-girls.

What To Do?

This report gives evidence of an appalling problem. It points to the obvious fact that ignorance is at bottom the cause. But it does

not give any hint as to the kind of education that is needed. The type of instruction on this subject which is available in some 250 colleges and universities in the United States, while perhaps offering something of value to young adults, is manifestly unsuitable for the purposes of the junior high school and high school curriculum. The problem is really a matter for solution in the home. As Donald Culross Peattie said in a letter to *The Reader's Digest* (December, 1937), the blame for the moral delinquencies of youth "can be laid squarely at the parental door." This biologist and nature-lover is one of the few writers on this subject who, although his treatment is sadly inadequate, offers what he has to say in a spirit of reverence. (It is an interesting fact that naturalists as a group exhibit a sense of fitness toward the problems of life which is conspicuously absent from the speculations of the laboratory and "book" scientist.) But where shall the parents turn for guidance? Usually it is their own ignorance and self-indulgence which are reflected in the weaknesses of their children. The answer most frequently supplied is that "Science" can explain these things properly. Can it? We quote from Dr. Trigant Burrow, an eminent physician who has given much thought to this question:

"THEORY" OF MOTHERHOOD

> I shall not forget the experience told me by a patient whose mother, actuated by the theory of motherhood in its highest "scientific" interpretation, undertook to enlighten her upon the significance of sex. The incident left the most painful impression on her. The mother, having gathered courage for the performance of her maternal duty, delivered her errand with a punctiliousness which from the point of view of technique was irreproachable. She spoke out of the strictest regard for the theory of motherhood. But unfortunately her theory left out of account an item that needs to be reckoned with, namely, the native simplicity of the consciousness of childhood. The woman spoke out of the theory of a truth, but her child listened with the organic susceptibility of truth itself. The mother had not accepted within herself the actual significance of life, and so, in accordance with the formality of a theory, was vicariously imposing its acceptance upon her child. But childish perception pierces the veil of pedagogic finesse. The rigid demeanor of her instructor readily disclosed the discrepancy between the verbal recital and the utter lack of conscious acceptance within herself. For the child, now a middle-aged woman, the moment was an unforgettable one. She had witnessed in her mother an outrage

> of organic truth, and the shock of that experience caused a psychic disunity between mother and child from which there resulted an introversion of personality that covered half a lifetime. And so, while the theory of the nursery is from the point of view of theory wholly irreproachable, it is from the point of view of the nursery wholly absurd.
>
> A lesson which parents have yet to learn is that the child is closer to the heart of things than the grown-up—that the consciousness of childhood stands in a far more truthful relationship to the actuality of life as it is, than the consciousness of the conventionalized and sophisticated adult. (*The Social Basis of Consciousness,* pp. 22-3.)

Difficulties Involved

Science, adept in making formulas, will never assist society in problems such as these so long as it regards the human being as merely an illustration of biological process. Matter may respond to the application of formulas, but the Spirit in Man requires education in *principles,* and the teaching of these principles to children is a duty calling for the utmost in discrimination and understanding. Especially is this true in the case of modern society, which without exaggeration may be said to suffer from a literal obsession on the subject of sex. This is the reason, perhaps, why H. P. B. was so reserved in this regard. There are, however, categorical statements here and there. One of these was quoted in this department last month (August), and another *Secret Doctrine* reference will be found in a footnote to page 228 of volume I. Students might also read with profit the article, "Diagnoses and Palliatives," reprinted in Theosophy for March, 1916 (IV, 197). From the statements made in this article, and the facts disclosed by Mr. Buck's survey of conditions in the schools in America, it is worth while to turn to the conclusions of J. D. Unwin, an English anthropologist, who has published under the title of *Sex and Culture* (London: Oxford University Press, 1934) the results of a study of eighty societies, a large number of which were exceedingly primitive, all of them being divided into four groups or classes according to the refinement of their religious beliefs.

Continence and Culture

The details of Mr. Unwin's investigation are exhaustive, and we are here concerned only with his general observations, which are, however, based on a rigid application of scientific method. His net

conclusion is that cultural development is directly proportionate to continence in sexual relations. Promiscuity, which Mr. Unwin terms "sexual opportunity," has an opposite effect. The following points are illustrated by the historical careers of several selected societies:

1. that when they began to display great social energy the societies had reduced their sexual opportunity by the adoption of absolute monogamy;
2. that in each case the society was dominated by the group which displayed the greatest relative energy;
3. that as soon as the sexual opportunity of the society, or of a group within the society, was extended, the energy of the society, or of the group within it, decreased and finally disappeared.

Essential of Progress

Mr. Unwin thinks that a society which would rise to a high cultural level must establish complete equality between the sexes and alter its social organization so as to maintain a high degree of continence "for an extended period, and even forever." In such a case, he says, "the face of the society would be set in the direction of the cultural process; its inherited tradition would be continually enriched; it would achieve a higher culture than has yet been attained; by the action of human entropy its tradition would be augmented and refined in a manner which surpasses our present understanding." Passing over the implication that physical acts, or their restraint, can be a "cause" of anything, it may be emphasized that this extremely careful scientific research has shown that cultural decline is the inevitable concomitant of promiscuity. This is a fact, repeatedly demonstrated in history. That promiscuity is on the increase in America is also a fact, as shown by Mr. Buck's survey. Considered together, these facts are far from heartening. Something must be done, and quickly, if our civilization is to be preserved from a lapse into mechanized barbarism. Theosophists do not believe that a course in mammalian reproduction, over which the controversy among the members of the New York Board of Education rages, is the solution. "Sex education" is not moral education, and the sooner educators realize it the better, for moral education is what is needed.

"What Can We Believe?"

The *Atlantic Monthly* for June prints under this title the tragic cry of a wounded heart. It is "A Letter from a Mother," one whose

son, "Bill," a young law student, disappeared from his rooms and whose body was found in a near-by river three months later. The letter, which is anonymously published, was written to three close friends of the boy, who had asked, "What can we believe?" "Why should this happen to him?" It begins:

> *From our pitifully narrow human viewpoint, it is really impossible to see how an event may fit rationally into a majestic scheme of cosmic destiny.*

The mother, broken-hearted, exclaims, "Surely no loving God could plan such a world"—a world which imposed on one of its inhabitants three long months of horrible uncertainty such as she had experienced; — a world where all those who tried to comfort her suffered her misery, giving the living substance of their own hearts to try to fill the aching void in hers. But it was in this compassion felt by fellow human beings that she found, as she says, "God." When the deep chord of sympathy sounded for her in another, she could feel within the voice of her lost son, saying, "See, Mother, see." Gradually, she accepted what she could not understand.

"Where, Who, What is God?"

> The non-understandableness of the majestic scheme was not offered to me as a new thought, but, phrased anew, was sent to comfort me in my despair. Its expression of a serene acceptance of the human limitation calmed me, quieted the restless striving of my mind. Then, in a realm beyond consciousness, I was aware that I had looked into many hearts, great and lowly, wise and simple, but had failed to see what was pointed out to me. When I looked upon the loving-kindness there, I mistook the sign for the thing signified. I had not understood that kindness and love are bright signals that the soul gives to show God's presence in the heart—as the vessel in the harbor flies a pennant when the owner is aboard. What a difference in my feeling when at last I understood the purpose of the persistent "See, Mother, see," and I, too, found God in human hearts—where Bill had found Him! He had not called the beauty he found there "God"—perhaps he had not known its name—though in eager wonder he loved the radiance that God's presence made.

Reminiscence

One of the persons to whom this letter was directed had written of the boy, "Happiness shone in him like a light, and, after knowing him, I found that I had a spark of it glowing in me." Perhaps the soul that was her son knew too well the fire that dwells in the heart

of man to call it "God"—perhaps he knew a better name. The mother tells that when he was a babe of a few months, she was startled by "a sensation of delighted recognition."

> I felt that someone whom I had long known and loved had come to me in an amusing disguise and was laughing at himself and me. So strong was the feeling that I found myself saying aloud, "So it is you!" . . . Later, when Bill was a child of three years or a little more, he had been sitting in quiet contemplation as children often do; at last he said, "Before I came here, I chose you and Father. I saw you walking on the street and I chose you."

THE LAW OF SOUL-EVOLUTION

How much more than a childish fancy, which the mother thinks this is, perhaps, although linking with her own earlier experience. But these soul-urgings caused her to write:

> It is because of these things, perhaps, that most reasonable to me is the theory holding that each of us is an immortal soul in process of growth; that the soul's experience does not begin with its birth here, but is a continuation of spiritual growth that has been going on in other worlds than this or maybe in recurring earth lives; that the relation of the body to the soul is one of a temporarily useful tool, and that the body, with its attributes of intellect and emotion, is an instrument by whose means the soul gathers something needed for its growth and development.
>
> When I look about me and see the inequalities of endowment, of opportunity and desire, I think of the seemingly unjust differences in circumstances as conditions necessary, perhaps, for spiritual growth. If it should be true that souls do come to this earth in varying stages of development, some mere seeds carrying bare possibilities of growth, others beginning to show a slight quickening, still others more developed, and on in an ascending scale to those souls who, after many lifetimes of experience, come among us almost full-grown, almost God-like in their love and understanding—conditions would indeed have to be infinitely varied to meet the individual needs.

A "THIN IMAGINING"?

What better statement of the law of reincarnation, and of its glorious objective, could be found? Yet—

> Such a theory of spiritual growth apparently would offer solution of many mysteries. However, my feeling that the theory is a reasonable one does not assume the proportions of a belief,

> and so, for me, it dissolves into thin imagining. And such imagining is no answer to your question, "What can we believe now?" But I have no other answer, nor have I found an answer to "Why should this happen to him?"

This mother might find solace in the suggestion that the death of her son was the means of placing before hundreds of thousands the age-old doctrine of the destiny of the soul as taught in the Wisdom-Religion. There are those who live—and would willingly die—for this. There is no other answer to these soul-searching questions; and, what nobler purpose in both life and death?

Hope for Rotarians— and Others

Dr. Alexis Carrel recently told the members of the Rotary Club of New York that to reclaim modern civilization it will be necessary to abandon the philosophic attitudes of the eighteenth century and adopt a "scientific" view of life's many problems. (New York *Times,* April 14.) On this occasion, when he received the club's gold service medal "in recognition of a life devoted to the amelioration of human suffering," Dr. Carrel expressed his belief that "the quality of the mind is dependent on the quality of the tissues" making up the body. One wonders where this fits in with his former assertion, that "thought can generate organic lesions." His criticisms of eighteenth century optimism, however, are of interest. He says:

> Our civilization, with its democratic ideal, is based on ideologies of the eighteenth century. We have a great deal of scientific knowledge that we are using for the construction of material wealth and not for the progress of the human being and society.
>
> In our civilization we have misfits and feeble-minded persons that the people of the eighteenth century did not take into consideration. There are hereditary and pathological traits that make individuals different. We are not equal.
>
> If we used scientific concepts instead of ideologies, we might discover a new way of life which would be based on reality. If life is based on reality we cannot fail. If it is based on philosophical or sociological ideologies, we will fail as we already have failed.

Dictatorship of Science

If it is not too much to ask, What is "Reality," according to Science? Is Dr. Carrel's first principle that intellectual capacities are an efflorescence of bodily health? If so, a good many of us would prefer to plug along with old-fashioned, vacillating and in-

efficient democracy. A Fascism of modern science, with its program of selective breeding, sterilization and euthanasia . . . *or else,* holds no more charms than any other brand of totalitarianism. And, speaking of ideologies, just how are the theories of modern science exempt from this description? What reason is there to believe that white-aproned men with scalpels and test-tubes know more about the essential nature of mankind than John Locke or Jean Jacques Rousseau? Rousseau, like Carrel, wanted to "get back to nature," but both of these eminent thinkers have faltered somewhat in telling us exactly what this state of "Nature" is, to which we should return. Democracy doubtless has its faults, and there may be errors committed by the "New Deal" in the United States which even the Republican Party has omitted to mention, but if we desire information as to what a "Scientific Deal" might be like, we can ask the animal kingdom, the members of which, particularly dogs, horses, guinea pigs and monkeys, have had first-hand experience with applied scientific theory. From time to time one of the bolder members of the vivisecting fraternity asks for human material to experiment on—criminals or other degraded men who might be granted this golden opportunity to expiate their hereditary misfortunes.

Aristotle or Plato?

Dr. Carrel is not ignorant that, as a fellow scientist has put it, "Except for our specialties, we all belong to the masses." Thus he proposes that the intellectual resources of civilization be pooled:

> In applying specialized knowledge we see only one side of the problem. It should be seen from every point of human activity. Our present knowledge is too great to be in one mind. It should be co-ordinated into a brain pool or a sort of composite Aristotle. It could be done by private groups. It is too soon now but it will come because it is absolutely necessary.

"Brave, New World"

There is no doubt that *something* is absolutely necessary, but is it a "composite Aristotle"? Theosophists think that what is wrong with the world is too much Aristotle and not enough Plato. There is something infinitely offensive in the idea of turning to some "private group" for knowledge of how to live one's life, individually or collectively. One wonders if Dr. Carrel has not felt something of the sort himself. After these private groups have reported this week's Eternal Scientific Truths to the Bureau of Immediate

and National Decrees, and the new regulations as to diet and mating are issued, what about next week's Truths, which must be new and different, unless, alas, we are to stagnate under an unprogressive regime? Think of it: with science in politics we will have not merely mechanists and vitalists in biology, but all shades of from pink to red forward-looking geneticists, and reactionary biochemists! It's too bad Freud is so old; he could contribute much.

One fears that Dr. Carrel's proposed "noble experiment" would have the effect of ending all other experiments, including the experiment of human evolution on this planet. Unfortunately, with what is probably the best will in the world, this famous scientist is setting the stage for another era of dogmatic authority, persuading men that they are unable to solve their own problems. The destructive force of unguided genius is indeed mighty; let us hope that by the time scientists gain the power Dr. Carrel hopes for, they will have found a measure of soul-knowledge, too. In that event, they will seek for guidance in Plato's *Republic,* to learn the art of ministering to the needs of their fellows, leaving Aristotle to the specialists in research.

The Hidden Self

The age-old "shaving process," by which sages arrive at a perception of the Real, is not without its western expressions. In the *Cincinnati Alumnus* for May, published by the University of Cincinnati Alumni Association, a passage from a book by the late Dean Herman Schneider is printed, showing once again that the knowledge of the soul will find its natural outlet, whatever the conventional ideas and theories of the time. Dean Schneider, founder of the Co-operative System of Education and President Emeritus of the University, began the second chapter of his work, *The Problem of Vocational Guidance,* with these words:

> When I walk by and you say to your friend, "There goes So-and-So," what do you mean? . . . What you see are my clothes, my shoes, my hat, my glasses, my face, and my hands. . . . Is that all of Me? . . . You'll agree there is more inside. . . . But what you see I call my NUMBER ONE. . . . My shoes serve my feet by keeping them from being bruised; my clothes protect me from the elements; my glasses are tools for my eyes. . . . But you do not see ME. . . . Then is my physical body, denuded of these things, I? . . . No, for I say to my legs, "Walk over there"; I say to my hands, "Lift this Book!" I say to my eyes, "Look at this flower"; I say to my tongue, "Repeat these words." . . . My legs and arms are, tools, as my glasses are

tools. . . . So my physical being is not I. . . . I call my physical being my NUMBER TWO. . . . And still you do not see ME. . . . Then is my mind which directs my body, I? . . . No; for when I think evil or do evil, something beyond my mind lashes it; it stands me up and calls me to account. . . . It sits in judgment. . . . Like Natural Law, it can be flouted, but it is there all the time. . . . Often when I read, I go over the same sentence time after time without getting any meaning; I am in a "brown study." . . . Something beyond my mind is dominating me. . . . When I am "lost in thought," I am not consciously thinking; so back of the thinking mechanism which I operate consciously, there is something else. . . . My thinking mechanism I call my NUMBER THREE. . . . And the something back of it, I call my NUMBER FOUR. . . . The NUMBER FOUR is I.

"COINCIDENCE"—?

The first Englishman to take an interest in Indian antiquities was, according to the London *Times* (June 20), John Marshall, who, some 270 years ago, was chosen by Lord Curzon to be the director-general of the Survey of Indian Archaeology. Today the British Archaeological Department in India is headed by a distinguished scientist of the same name—Sir John Marshall. This "coincidence" is remarked by the eminent Frenchman, Alfred Foucher, who has written the introduction to a history of the archaeological work of the British in India, *Revealing India's Past,* just published by the India Society in England. M. Foucher suggests, says the *Times* editorial, "that in a land where the doctrine of reincarnation prevails there must be those who feel convinced that the same man was born again in more favorable circumstances to resume his task on a large scale and to be the Sir John Marshall of international fame." Whether this be the fact or not, few can say, but it is at any rate an interesting speculation. Whatever Sir John Marshall's past life may have been, modern archaeology owes its knowledge of the great antiquity of Indian civilization to his research. The findings of his corps of workers at Mohenjo-Daro in Sind, and Harappa in the Punjab, point to the probability that the Mesapotamian cultures were established by colonists from India. Aryavarta is indeed the Motherland of all modern civilization and its arts and sciences. It is pleasant to learn from the London *Times* that Sir John's Department is today staffed entirely by Indians.